

NOMENCLATURAL HISTORY AND REDISCOVERY OF
PENTACOMIA (BECKERIUM) LEPTALIS (BATES)
(COLEOPTERA: CICINDELIDAE)^{1, 2}

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ABSTRACT: Three specimens of *Pentacomia (Beckerium) leptalis* (Bates) were collected 2 mi NE Candelaria Loxicha, Oaxaca, Mexico. Other than references to the type series this is the first published collection record for this species since its description in 1881. The specimens are compared to the type series and notes on their habitat and behavior are given.

This species was first described as *Odontochila leptalis* Bates (1881) from specimens collected at Cerro de Plumas by Hoge and at Juquila, Oaxaca, Mexico by Boucard. In 1897 Horn removed the species from *Odontochila* and placed it in his monotypic genus *Beckerium*. In 1910 *Beckerium* was placed in species group IV of the genus *Prothyma* Hope by Horn who also listed it in *Prothyma* in the Coleopterum Catalogus (1926). Rivalier (1969) restricted the genus *Prothyma* to the tropical eastern hemisphere and used the generic name *Pentacomia* Bates to include the small *Odontochila*-like species which inhabit Central and South America. Rivalier also grouped the 26 species of *Pentacomia* into 5 subgenera and placed *P. leptalis* in the monotypic subgenus *Beckerium* Horn. The name for the species is now *Pentacomia (Beckerium) leptalis* (Bates).

The Cerro de Plumas locality listed by Bates (1881) cannot be located. Horn (1897), under *Cicindela rufiventris mellyi* Chaudoir, lists the locality of Cerro de Plumas as questionably being in Veracruz. Selander and Vaurie (1962) indicate that this may be Cerro de Palmas, Veracruz, which also cannot be located on maps available to me. The second locality, Juquila, Oaxaca, is placed at 16° 14'N, 97° 18'W at an elevation of 4900' by Selander and Vaurie (1962). Bates (1881) did not indicate the number of specimens in the type series and no ecological data were given. Horn (1897) using information from one of the collectors of the types (Hoge), notes that *P. leptalis* was collected in rather large numbers at dusk on forest paths, flying to [or sitting on] ferns.

Other than the collection data supplied by Hoge in Horn (1897), probably in reference to the type series, no records indicating the collection of *P. leptalis* have been published since the original description 97 years ago. There

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are no recently collected specimens in the British Museum of Natural History (BMNH) (G.G. Kibby, pers. comm.) or North American collections. Because of the lack of information on the species, I believe it is important to record its recent collection and the ecological and behavioral information associated with it.

Three specimens (1 ♂, 2 ♀) were collected 2 mi NE Candelaria Loxicha, Oaxaca, Mexico, 15° 54'N, 96° 31'W on 18 July 1974 at an elevation of 1400'. This locality is near the Juquila, Oaxaca locality of Bates (1881). The specimens were collected by me between 1030 and 1400 hours (CST) running on a shaded footpath located in dense tropical undergrowth. They did not attempt to fly. Later examination revealed that the second pair of wings is fully developed and the elytra are not fused so that flight is possible.

Specimens of *P. leptalis* in the BMNH were borrowed for comparative purposes. There are 14 specimens (10 ♂, 4 ♀; 1 ♂ and 1 ♀ are headless) which probably represent the original type series. A single ♂ is labeled Juquila and the remaining 13 specimens are from Cerro de Plumas. One ♂ from Cerro de Plumas collected by Hoege is labeled "sp. figured, Type". Two additional specimens are labeled cotype. However, since the number of specimens in the original type series is not mentioned and no type was designated the entire series should be considered as syntypes.

The ♂ from 2 mi NE Candelaria Loxicha is slightly larger whereas the 2 ♀'s are slightly smaller when compared with 5 ♂'s and 2 ♀'s from Cerro de Plumas. The elytral length of the Candelaria Loxicha ♂ measured from apex of the scutellum to elytral apex is 4.03 mm while 5 ♂'s from Cerro de Plumas average 3.85 mm (range 3.81-3.92). The elytra of the 2 Candelaria Loxicha ♀'s are 4.09 and 4.14 mm in length while the elytra of 2 ♀'s from Cerro de Plumas are 4.20 and 4.31 mm in length. All specimens are immaculate and green dorsally, but the Candelaria Loxicha ♂ agrees more closely with the brownish green color of the single Juquila ♂, and the 2 Candelaria Loxicha ♀'s tend toward the greener color of the Cerro de Plumas specimens. Other than these slight color and size differences there are no apparent morphological differences between the 2 series and they are considered conspecific. One Candelaria Loxicha ♀ of *P. leptalis* will be deposited in the Department of Entomology, Texas A&M University collection.

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